

emptorily summoned to Rome. Evidently expecting that the Emperor would condemn him and order the confiscation of the holy vessels of his church, Mensurius secretly handed them over to the custody of certain elders in whose honesty he thought he could place implicit reliance. But he took the precaution—a wise one, as it subsequently proved—to make an inventory, which he gave to an old woman, with instructions that if he did not return she was to hand it to his lawfully appointed successor. Mensurius then went to Rome, succeeded in convincing Maxentius of his innocence, but died on the way home, in 311 A.D. As soon as the news of his death reached Carthage, the round of intrigue began. According to Optatus, two deacons named Botrus and Celestius, each hoping to secure his own elevation, hurried on the election, in which the Numidian bishops were not invited to take part. The passage is obscure, for Optatus goes on to say that the choice fell upon Caecilianus, who was elected "by the suffrages of the whole people," and was consecrated in due form by Felix, Bishop of Aptunga. When Csecilianus called upon the elders to restore the Church ornaments, they quitted the Church—the suggestion of the Catholic historian is that they had hoped to steal them—and attached themselves to the faction of Lucilla, together with Botrus and Celestius, whom St. Augustine roundly denounces as "impious and sacrilegious thieves." The schism was now complete. It had its origin, says Optatus,\*

\* *Schisma igittir illo tempore confuses mulieris iracundia peperit, ambitus nutrit, avaritia roboravit.*